

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01

SS-14 RSR-01 /134 W

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O R 132145 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6774

INFO USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 253

GOV PANCANAL

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 1305

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN UNSC UN

SUBJECT: U. N. SECURITY COUNCIL IN PANAMA -- GOP PREPARATIONS

REF: PANAMA A-44 OF FEB 21, 1973

SUMMARY: GOP HAS PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS FOR CONFERENCE UNDER CONTROL. BLATANT PROPAGANDA DOMINATES AREA NEAR MEETING SITE, BUT NO EVIDENCE OF IT ELSEWHERE. NO SIGNS OF ANY PUBLIC GATHERINGS IN CONNECTION WITH MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. ON EVE OF ARRIVAL OF UNSC DELEGATIONS, GOP HAS COMPLETED VIRTUALLY ALL WORK ON PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS FOR COUNCIL MEETING. ON MONDAY, MARCH 12, LT. COL. MANUEL NORIEGA LOWERED THE PANAMANIAN FLAG IN FRONT OF THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE AND COL. HAROLD TRIBLE, UN SECURITY CHIEF, HOISTED THE UN FLAG IN ITS PLACE. ACCORDING TO THE PANAMANIAN MEDIA " WITH THE CHANGE OF FLAG, THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE BECAME UN TERRITORY FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING." WHILE MISCELLANEOUS WORK GOES ON INSIDE THE MEETING HALL, MAJOR FACILITIES ARE IN PLACE AS ARE

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SOME 75 PLAIN CLOTHES NATIONAL GUARD REPRESENTATIVES IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA. NATIONAL GUARDSMEN ON HORSEBACK PATROL THE AREA IN BACK OF THE MEETING HALL, INCLUDING SHALER TRIANGLE UNDER U. S. JURISDICTION. A PRIVATE PANAMANIAN HELICOPTER APPARENTLY CHARTERED BY NEWSMAN ALSO LANDED IN THIS AREA UNDER U. S. JURISDICTION MORNING OF MARCH 13.

2. LIKEWISE, ACCESS TO THE HOTEL PANAMA IS NOW CONTROLLED WHILE IT AND OTHER MAJOR HOTELS IN PANAMA CITY HAVE BECOME CENTERS FOR UNSC ACTIVITY.

3. PANAMANIAN PROPAGANDA SO FAR REMAINS CLOSELY DIRECTED. MASSIVE BILLBOARDS OVER THREE STORIES HIGH ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE MEETING HALL AND AROUND THE CORNER FROM IT PROCLAIM TORRIJOS' MESSAGES IN SPANISH, ENGLISH, FRENCH, RUSSIAN AND CHINESE. ONE MESSAGE REPEATS TORRIJOS' OFT QUOTED PHRASE FROM HIS MAY 1, 1971 SPEECH: " YOU MAY REST ASSURED THAT IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U. S. YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND US ON OUR FEET AND NEVER ON OUR KNEES, NEVER." THE OTHER SIGN READS: " LET THE AMBASSADORS OF THE FRIENDLY REPUBLICS AND MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN PRESS HERE PRESENT ANSWER: " WHAT NATION OF THE WORLD CAN ACCEPT THE HUMILIATION OF A FOREIGN FLAG PIERCING ITS OWN HEART." OTHER SMALLER SIGNS NEAR THE AREA ALSO QUOTE TORRIJOS' PHRASES ON THE CANAL QUESTION. ASIDE FROM THESE, THERE IS NO OFFICIAL OR PRIVATE PANAMANIAN PROPAGANDA DISPLAYED ANYWHERE IN THE CITY. DISPLAYS OF THIS TYPE ARE QUITE COMMON IN PANAMA.

4. DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT FROM SECTORAL GROUPS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE PROMINENT COVERAGE IN THE LOCAL MEDIA AND WE CONTINUE TO EXPECT THAT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE DELEGATIONS, THE MEDIA WILL BE FILLED WITH SUCH DECLARATIONS.

5. THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA, NOW IN ITS SUMMER SESSION, IS QUIET WITH NO VISIBLE SIGNS OF ANY PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN ANY ASPECT OF THE UNSC MEETING. A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON THE MEETING HELD MARCH 12 HAS BEEN THE ONLY RELATED ACTIVITY HELD THERE. THE GOP DID UTILIZE A CORNER OF THE UNIVERSITY TO PAINT THE LARGE BILLBOARDS LATER ERECTED NEAR THE COUNCIL' S MEETING HALL. THERE ARE NO PUBLIC INDICATIONS OF ADVANCE PROMOTION
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OF ANY MASS ACTIVITY ANYWEHERE IN THE CITY DURING THE UNSC.

GIVEN THE SURFACE APATHY OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE, SUCH ADVANCE
PREPARATION WOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO CARRYING OUT ANY MASS ACTIVITY.
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PANAMA01305
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730325/aaaahngc.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 PANAMA A-44
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02-Oct-2001 by smithjr>; APPROVED <06-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971120
Subject: U. N. SECURITY COUNCIL IN PANAMA -- GOP PREPARATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PN, UNSC
To: GOV PANCANAL
IO
SECSTATE WASHDC
USCINCSO
USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

